GOOD NEWS FOR HOMEMAKERS

By Shirley W. Walton
Extension Agent

Hints for the Outdoor Cook

With outdoor cooking in full swing, it's time to get ready for several months of outdoor fun and fellowship. Regardless of your menu or equipment, you need some helpful hints in order to make your cookouts easier and the food taste better. I would like to suggest some of the following things for you to consider as you enjoy preparing foods outside for your family:

1. Build a fire only large enough for the amount of food to be grilled. Do not waste your charcoal. It cost money! Allow about 30 minutes for the charcoal briquets to turn ash gray before putting food on the grill. When using gas or electric heat, preheat the grill.

Please meat 4 to 5 inches above the heat, unless cooking instructions state otherwise. Just before pieces of meat are completely done, move them to the outer edge of the grill where they will finish cooking and remain hot, but won't cook as rapidly as cuts in the center directly over the heat.

3. When grilling steaks, turn them only once. Turning frequently dries out the meat. Always use tongs to turn steaks. A fork will pierce the meat and allow the juice to escape. To prevent steak from curling while grilling, score or slit the fat along the edge at about 1½ inch intervals before placing the meat on the grill.

4. Food may be basted during the entire cooking time or during the last half hour depending on the ingredients in the sauce. Remember, ladies, that a sauce containing sugar will burn readily. This should be applied during the last 15 to 30 minutes of cooking time. A long-handled cotton dish mop works best for basting and should be used only for basting.

5. A meat thermometer inserted so the bulb doesn't touch bone or fat is the most accurate way to test doneness if you are barbequing a large piece of meat. For a roast, insert the thermometer in the center. Beef will be rare when the internal temperature is 140°F., medium at 160°F. and well-done at 170°F. Fresh pork should always be cooked until the internal temperature is 180°F For poultry the thermometer should be inserted into the thickest part of the thigh, close the the body. Poultry is done when the thermometer registers 180 to 185 degrees.

6. Precooking spareribs in the kitchen cuts down on cooking time on the grill, and also helps to remove some of the fat, thus, eliminating flareups on the grill. Boil in a small amount of water or bake at 350 degrees about 30 minutes. Drain well before putting on the grill and baste with your favorite sauce as ribs cook.

7. When grilling chicken halves, place bony or rib cage side of chicken next to the heat first. The bones act as an insulator and prevent the chicken from browning too fast. Twist the drumstick to test for doneness. If the joints twist out of the socket easily, the meat is done.

8. When using the rotisserie with your barbeque grill, make certain the rotisserie rod is inserted in the center of the meat lengthwise and that the spit forks are tight. This will keep the meat balanced and make the rotisserie turn evenly.

9. When using skewers, select long sturdy ones that reach completely across the grill. Place food on skewers leaving space between each piece to allow for heat penetration and thorough basting. Unless some vegetables are parboiled, they may require longer time than meat cubes. Therefore, you may want to put them on separate skewers.

10. Frozen vegetables are delicious cooked on the grill. Remove from package, dot with butter and season. Wrap in heavy duty aluminum foil securely while still frozen. Cook vegetables 30 to 40 minutes, turning once during the cooking process.

11. Why not try some potatoes and carrots and onions cooked together with hamburger on the grill. This makes a good meal in a pouch.

12. Disposable pans for heating vegetables, bread or other foods on the grill are easily made from heavy duty aluminum foil. Just tear off a length of foil, turning up the edges to make 1½ to 2 inch sides. Pinch corners to prevent leaking.

Homemakers, outdoor cooking can be lots of fun. You might find that if you invest in a $3.00 or $4.00 electric starter, you will save buying lighter fluid. This not only saves money over the course of the summer, but it also will keep the fear of the lighter fluid tasting in your food.

If you have a homemaking question or problem, call or write the Appomattox County Extension Office. It is always a pleasure to hear from you.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK
French Bread
(Makes 4 loaves)

7 to 8 cups unsifted flour
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon salt
3 pkgs. active dry yeast
3 tablespoons softened margarine
1 tablespoon cold water
2½ cups very warm tap water (120°F. - 130°F.)
Corn meal
Peanut oil
1 egg white, beaten
Toasted sesame seed (optional)

In a large bowl thoroughly mix 2½ cups flour, sugar, salt and undissolved active dry yeast. Add margarine.

Gradually add tap water to dry ingredients and beat 2 minutes at medium speed of electric mixer, scraping bowl occasionally. Add 1 cup flour. Beat at high speed 2 minutes, scraping bowl occasionally. Stir in enough additional flour to make a stiff dough. Turn out onto lightly floured board; knead a few times to form a ball.

Divide into 4 pieces. Roll each into a 15 x 8 inch oblong. Roll up tightly as for Jelly Roll. Place on greased baking sheet sprinkled with corn meal. Brush with oil. Cover tightly with plastic wrap. Freeze until firm. Remove from baking sheet and wrap each with plastic wrap. Keep frozen up to 6 weeks.

Remove from freezer; place on ungreased baking sheets, corn meal side down. Let stand, covered with plastic wrap, at room temperature until fully thawed, about 1 hour and 45 minutes. Let rise in warm place, free from draft, until more than doubled in bulk, about 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Gently brush with combined egg white and cold water. Sprinkle with seasame seed. Bake at 450°F. 20 to 25 minutes, or until done. Remove from baking sheets and cool on wire racks.

Farm Bureau Women To Sponsor Poster Contest

The Women's Committee of Appomattox County Farm Bureau is again sponsoring the "Farm Family Life Poster Contest." The contest is open to Farm Bureau families' children, age 10 and under. (Age is interpreted to mean if the child is 10 at any time during the year of the entry.) Posters must be turned in at the Appomattox County Extension office by Monday, July 25. Size of posters to be 22" x 28" or the standard posterboard.

Winners will be announced at the picnic on Saturday, July 30.

First prize will be $5; second prize, $3; third prize, $2. First prize entry will compete in the district contest. A trophy will be awarded the district winner.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Suzine Krantz, Concord (993-2869), or Mrs. Virginia Martin, Pamplin (248-6508.)

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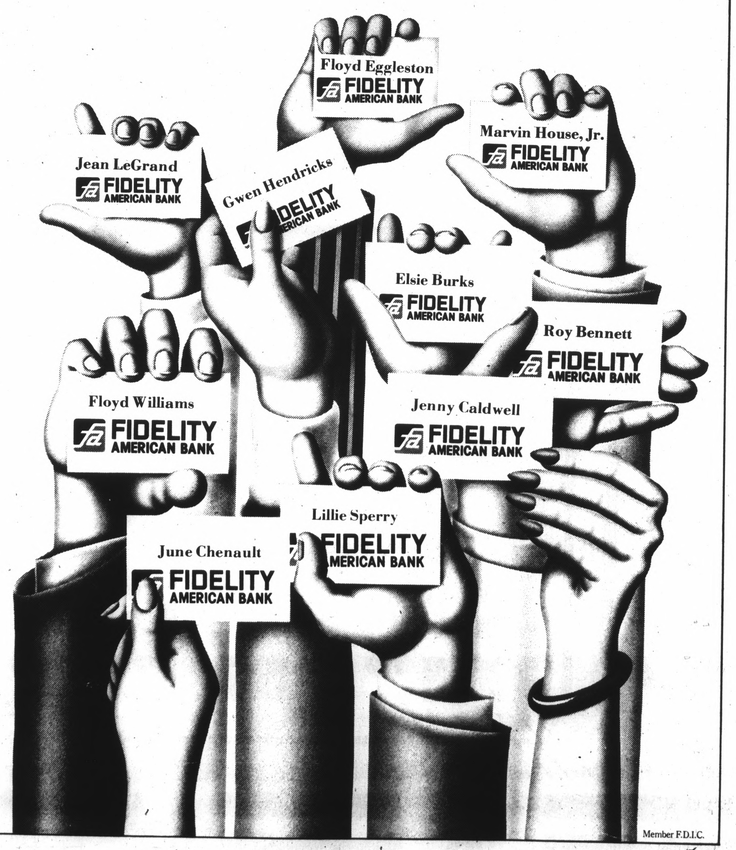

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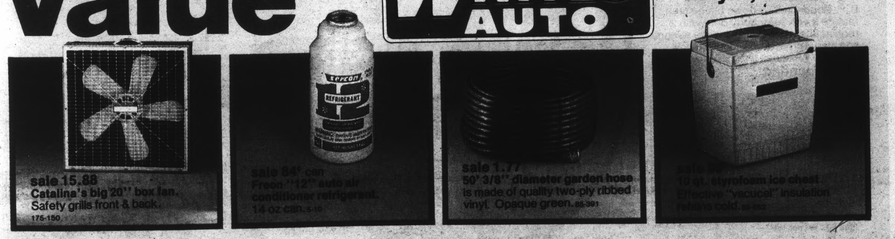
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